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CARAVAN

SPECIAL ISSUE: THE TOBACCO HEARINGS

Looking into RJR's mailbox

Editor's note: The nationally televised tobacco hearings on Capitol Hill have prompted many smokers and nonsmokers across the country to contact RJR. The overwhelming majority of this mail has expressed support for the industry's position. Following are excerpts from some of the letters sent to Jim Johnston's office during April, including some copies he received of letters written to legislators. Despite the extremely negative comments that appear in many national news stories, there are also many RJR customers and others who speak just as strongly in the industry's defense. We want to give our employees a chance to hear "the other side of the story," as told by our customers and other taxpayers and voters.

FROM ONEONTA, NEW YORK ...

"At present, I am not a smoker, in the past, I was an occasional smoker. In the future, I might once again want to smoke if I don't need someone to tell me if I can smoke or not. When I do smoke, I always ask the company I am with if it might bother them, and if it might I certainly would not smoke.

Many of the members of that subcommittee have forgotten why their ancestors came to this country. They came because on the other side they were told what they could and could not do. They came here to have the right to make their own decisions and to be themselves responsible for whether it was right or wrong ...

(continued on page 4)

Tobacco CEOs testify before subcommittee

Jim Johnston (left), CEO of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., and William Campbell, CEO of Philip Morris, were among seven executives of U.S. tobacco companies sworn in to testify at a congressional hearing on April 14.

Seven tobacco company executives raised their right hands and swore to tell the truth at a congressional hearing on April 14. But getting their facts out on the table was often difficult because throughout the six hours of testimony, the executives were interrupted, harassed and sometimes ridiculed by some of the congressmen presiding over the hearings.

The CEOs of the seven major tobacco companies were testifying before the Subcommittee on Health and the Environment of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce, headed by Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.). The inquiry covered topics ranging from "addiction" to youth smoking. The rude and hostile tone of the proceedings, which were televised nationally, prompted some news reporters and countless citizens to criticize the tactics and behavior of leaders in the anti-smoking industry. Many compared the tobacco hearings to the Joe McCarthy hearings on communism of the 1950s.

James W. Johnston, Reynolds Tobacco's chairman and CEO, told the subcommittee that the real issue is prohibition. "The anti-smoking industry is committed to ▶▶▶

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Source: https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/lrfn0000